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HERCULES

PRINCE OF POWER



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Stan Lee
PRESENTS: **HERCULES™, PRINCE OF POWER**

THE PLANET DENICIERE IS A VERY CIVILIZED WORLD! THERE ARE ONLY TWO THINGS ITS INHABITANTS DISLIKE PASSIONATELY--TROUBLEMAKERS AND SKRULLS!

A FEW HOURS AGO, THE DENICIERIANS HAD THEIR FILL OF BOTH, COURTESY OF THE FLEEING TRIO THAT FATE HAS BROUGHT TOGETHER THIS DAY--AN AGING SKRULL HIDING OUT FROM HIS OWN PEOPLE AND NEARLY EVERYONE ELSE IN THE GALAXY, AN OLYMPIAN GOD LOOKING FOR ADVENTURE AND A GOOD TIME, AND A RIGELLIAN RECORDER TRYING TO KEEP ALL HIS NUTS AND BOLTS IN ONE PIECE!

HALT! THIS IS THE STRATOS-PATROL! YOUR ER... "VEHICLE" HAS NOT RECEIVED AUTHORIZATION TO TAKE OFF! YOU WILL LAND IMMEDIATELY AND SURRENDER!

THIS THING IS FLYING! HERCULES! HOW IN THE NAME OF BLALAK CAN THIS THING FLY???

INTERROGATIVE: SHALL I RELAY TO SKYPP! THE WILL-OF-ZEUS ROUTINE, SIR?

RED WOLF STALKS THE STARS!

BOB LAYTON ★ **RICK PARKER** ★ **CHRISTIE SCHEELE** ★ **BOB BUDIANSKY** ★ **JIM SHOOTER**
CREATOR OF NIFTY WORDS AND PICTURES CREATOR OF LETTERS AND BIG KA-BOOMS! CREATOR OF FASHIONABLE COLORS CREATOR OF FREE-LANCERS' HEADACHES CREATOR OF THE 25-HOUR WORK DAY!

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LISTEN, BICEP-BREATH! IF WE DON'T LAND THIS FLYIN' WHEEL-BARROW, THEY'RE GONNA BLOW US OUTTA THE SKY!

OBSERVATION: FOR ONCE, I AM INCLINED TO AGREE WITH HIM, SIR! PERHAPS WE SHOULD TRY TO OUTFRIN THEM!

FLEE? NAY, MY FRIENDS!



THE PRINCE OF POWER WOULD NOT DENY OUR PURSUERS THE HONOR OF RECEIVING--

STATEMENT: UH-OH! HERE HE GOES AGAIN!

--THE GIFT! OF COMBAT!

NO! C-COME BACK, HERC!

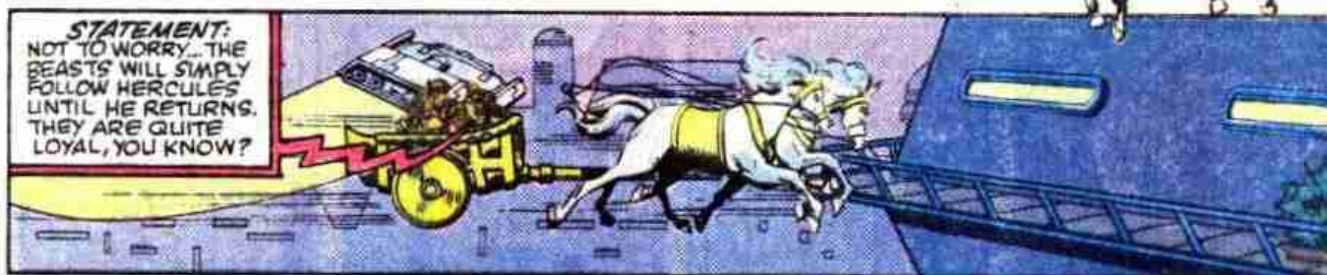


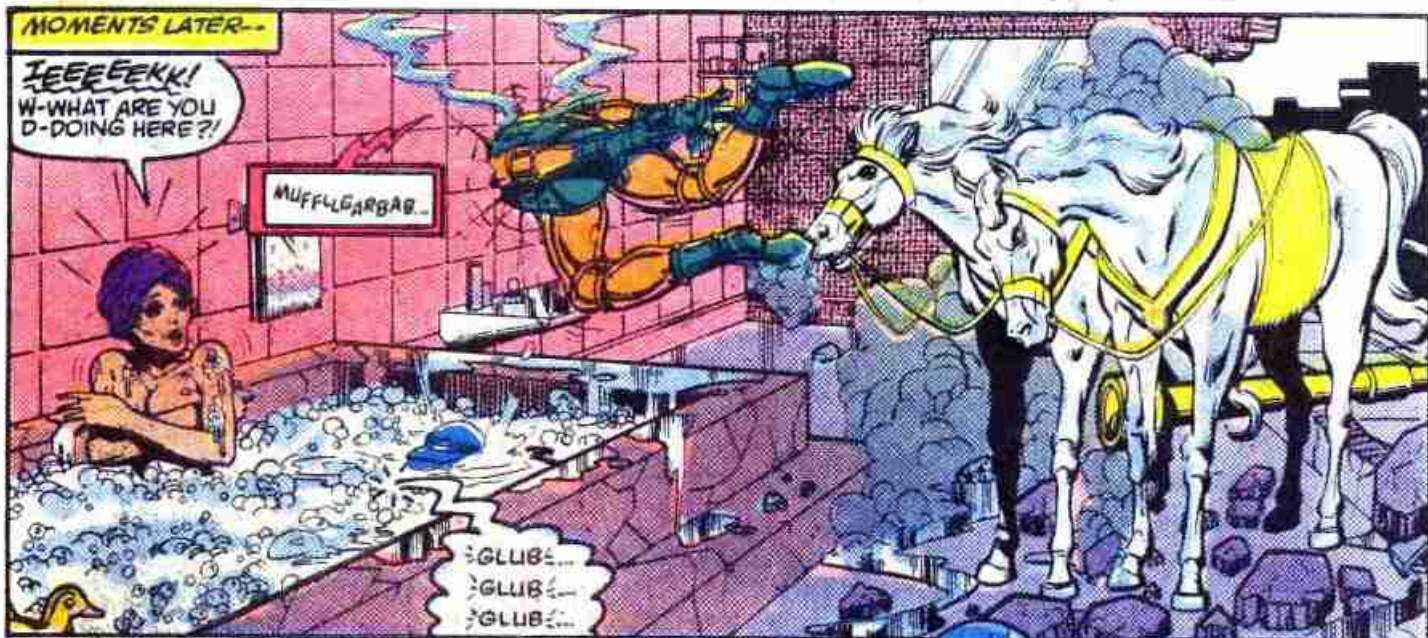
HEY, PAKO... DID YOU JUST HEAR SOMETHIN'?

Y-YEAH! IT SOUNDED LIKE A MUFFLED..



Y-YA KNOW... I THINK THIS IS GONNA HURT!







RECORDER!
ARE YE ILL?

CONCLUSION:
IT WOULD SEEM THAT
THE COLLISION KNOCKED
MY GYRO'S OUT OF ALIGN-
MENT! I AM AFRAID I
WILL NOT BE ABLE TO
CONTINUE UNDER MY
OWN POWER, SIR!

GREAT! JUST GREAT!
WE'RE GONNA SPEND
THE NEXT HUNDRED
YEARS IN THE SLAM.
THANKS TO MUSCLE-
MIND, HERE!

R-RECORDER... FORGIVE
ME! I NEVER THOUGHT
MY IMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR
WOULD INJURE THEE!

THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM--YOU NEVER
THINK! LET'S
JUST GET
OUTTA HERE,
OK? I KNOW
A PLACE
WHERE WE
CAN FIX
RECCY UP!

GATHERING THEM-
SELVES TOGETHER,
THE TRIO ESCAPE
THE AUTHORITIES
EASILY! THEN WITH
A TUG OF THE
MYSTICAL HORSE'S
REINS, HERCULES
WARPS HIS CHARIOT
INTO HYPERSPACE
TOWARD THEIR
DESTINATION--

-- STARSTATION PHILORD!

IT IS A SPECIAL DAY ABOARD
THIS ELECTRONIC MAINTENANCE
STATION. ALL THE CREW MEMBERS
OF THE CYBER-TECH UNION
(LOCAL 27) ARE GATHERED IN
THE MAIN DOCKING BAY TO
ENTHUSIASTICALLY GREET
THEIR CANDIDATE FOR
UNION PRESIDENT--

-- PARNAL BANAK!

GREETINGS,
WORKER
BROTHERS!

LOCAL 27
CYBERNETIC
TECH UNION
WANTS
BANAK

HOORAY FOR
BANAK!

ELECT
BANAK
FOR UNION
PRESIDENT
CYBER-TECH
UNION
LOCAL # 420

GO GET
'EM, REE!

VO
FO
BA



















"...THE HORN! THE IMMENSE REPRESENTATION OF THEIR GOD! FLAMES LEAPED FROM THE BRAZIER IN ITS HANDS, FILLING THE ROOM WITH ACID FUMES AND LIGHT!



"FEAR FROZE ME WHERE I STOOD!"

"THE FUMES BECAME THICKER--I FELT, SUCCUMBING TO THE CHOKING, DENSE CLOUDS THAT ENVELOPED ME!



"THEN--A VOICE!"

HEAR US, ROJOHN SMYTHE! WE ARE THE SPIRITS OF THE TALBOSIAN RACE! YOU SHALL BE OUR INSTRUMENT OF VENGEANCE!

"A FIGURE FLOATED BEFORE ME...



FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS WE HAVE WAITED FOR A LIVING FORM FOR OUR SPIRITS TO ENTER! WE SHALL NOT KNOW PEACE UNTIL YOUR MISSION IS COMPLETED--

--THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SKRULL RACE!

YOU SHALL BECOME THE EMBODIMENT OF OUR GOD--THE RED WOLF!

"HOURS LATER, I AWOKE, UNSURE IF I HAD DREAMT THE WHOLE THING! SOMETHING INSIDE OF ME SAID TO LEAVE THE PLANET WHILE I STILL COULD--



"--AND THAT WAS EXACTLY WHAT I DID!"



"BUT THE DREAM CONTINUED TO HAUNT MY THOUGHTS! I COULDN'T SEEM TO FORGET IT! THEN, A FEW DAYS LATER, THE DREAM BECAME--

"--A LIVING NIGHTMARE!"



I WAS AT A REFUELING STATION! A GROUP OF ADMINISTRATORS PASSED BY AND I... I COULD SOMEHOW SENSE THAT ONE OF THEM WAS ACTUALLY A SKRULL! THAT'S WHEN MY FIRST TRANSFORMATION OCCURRED! THE SPIRITS INSIDE ME TOOK CONTROL! THEY... MURDERED THE SHAPE-CHANGER!

THE SAME THING OCCURRED AGAIN, HERE ON THIS STATION A FEW HOURS AGO! I TRIED TO RESIST THE CHANGE, BUT THE WOLF-SPIRITS ARE TOO STRONG! THEY PLAN TO USE ME TO EXTERMINATE THE SKRULLS-- EVERY LAST ONE!

SO BELIEVE ME, HERCULES-- I KNOW ABOUT NIGHTMARES!



THE TALE IS INDEED TRAGIC, SMYTHE! 'TWOULD SEEM THAT NEITHER OF US IS MASTER OF HIS OWN FATE! I CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ME IS A SIGN FROM MY FATHER, ZEUS!

THE PRINCE OF POWER MUST LEAVE THIS PLACE AND RETURN TO OLYMPUS!



MEANWHILE--

I KNOW HE'S GOTTA BE IN ONE OF THESE CELL BLOCKS... AH, THERE HE IS!



HIYA, MUSCLES! HANG ON TO YER MOOGIES AND I'LL HAVE YOU OUT IN A SEC! THOSE GUARDS WILL NEVER KNOW WHAT HAPPENED!

HUH... S-SKYPPI? I... WAIT! ACT NOT!



FLEE! THOU ART IN THE GRAVEST DANGER! GET THEE AWAY!

HEY--WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR FRIEND THERE? IS HE SICK OR SOMETHIN'?



RUN, SKYPPI!

SKRULL!



IN AN INSTANT, THE DISGUISED SKRULL IS DOWN...

WOULDN'T YOU RATHER PLAY FETCH OR SOMETHIN', PAL?

NOW, SHAPE-CHANGER-- YOU WILL DIE!

BUT BEFORE RED WOLF CAN DELIVER THE DEATH-STROKE--





BY THE IKCNN!
THE
SKRULL
HAS
ESCAPED
US!



BUT NO MATTER--
WE HAVE HIS SCENT!
SOON, WE SHALL HAVE
HIM, AS WELL!



SECONDS LATER--
ARGGH-- METHINKS THERE
ARE SERIOUS DRAWBACKS
TO THIS NEW RESOLUTION
OF MINE!

BUT, I BEST
MAKE HASTE
IF I AM TO SAVE
THE SKRULL!



FURTHER DOWN THE
CORRIDOR--

THANK ZEUS,
THE GUARDS
ARE ONLY
UNCONSCIOUS!
SURELY THE
RED WOLF
MUST BE
CLOSE BY!



MEANWHILE--

YOU CANNOT
ESCAPE, SKRULL!
WE KNOW YOU
ARE HERE! YOUR
TIME IS AT HAND!

I DON'T
GET IT--WHAT
DID I DO TO TICK
THIS GUY OFF
SO MUCH?



SUDDENLY--

AARRRKK!
~CHOKED~

SHRWUMPP!



THERE IS NOWHERE
YOU CAN HIDE --
NEITHER IN AN-
OTHER FORM
NOR BEHIND
STEEL WALLS!

AND NOW,
SKRULL--
YOU DIE!

I
BEG THEE,
DESIST!





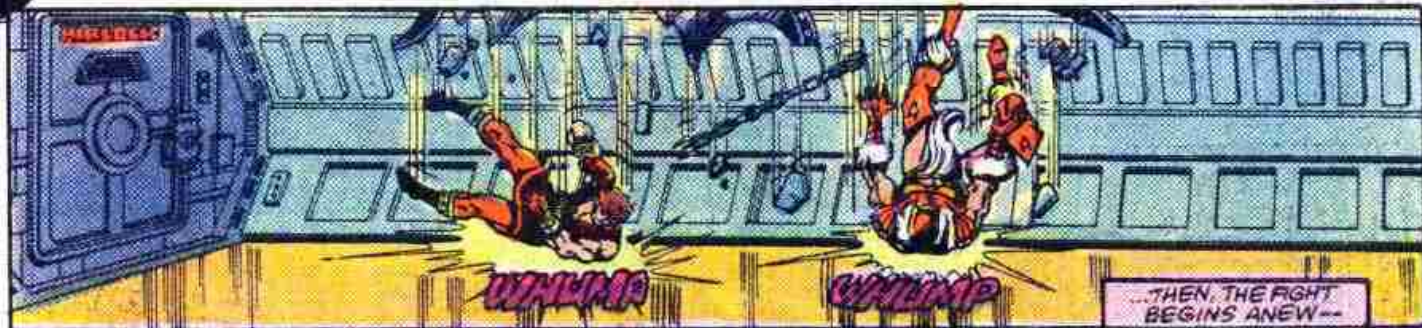
INCREDIBLE ENERGIES SURGE FROM THE MYSTIC COUP-STICK! UNABLE TO BREAK FREE, HERCULES DECIDES TO--

-- PUT HIS FOOT DOWN!

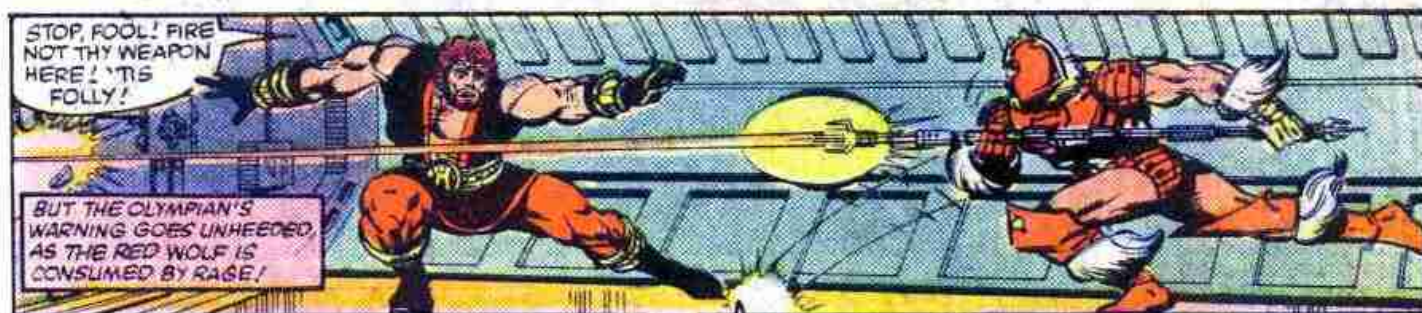
VERTIGO



BOTH COMBATANTS FALL TO THE NEXT LEVEL OF THE STATION



...THEN, THE FIGHT BEGINS ANEW--



STOP, FOOL! FIRE NOT THY WEAPON HERE! 'TIS FOLLY!

BUT THE OLYMPIAN'S WARNING GOES UNHEEDED, AS THE RED WOLF IS CONSUMED BY RAGE!



NOW, SKRULL-LOVER-- YOU SHALL DIE!

NO, YOU MADMAN! WE ARE IN--



